



Kentucky Department of Agriculture

A Consumer
Protection And
Service Agency

MARKETING MATTERS

Office of Agriculture Marketing and Product Promotion
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Coping with the 'Canes'

Staff Report

This has been a catastrophic year for hurricanes through the Gulf States. In addition to the thousands of human lives, homes and businesses that have been lost to hurricanes and flooding, agriculture has also suffered a tremendous impact.

It's hard to imagine the plight of farmers who had no choice but to weather the storms and try to protect their animals through the hurricanes of 2005. Reports of washed-out fences, flooded hay, and salt/silt deposits destroying pastureland, not to mention the devastation to row crops in the region, encouraged the Kentucky Department of Agriculture to take action. To date more than \$25,000 in fencing supplies, feed, and in-kind donations have been accepted by KDA and sent to farmers along the gulf.

Kentucky farm organizations rallied around their fellow farmers in the hurricane-ravaged Gulf Coast states with donations to buy the feed, fencing and other supplies they needed to get their farms going again.

The Kentucky Cattlemen's Association stepped up to the plate with a \$5,000 donation – the largest single gift so far in the Kentucky Department of Agriculture's drive to collect donations of farm supplies and cash to take to Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi.

"Everybody has compassion for those folks," Eddie Young of Washington County, president of the KCA, said of the beleaguered farmers in the hurricanes' path. "One morning I was watching TV and watched them try to round up their cattle. We all have cattle, and we know what it is to do those things. It's going to be a long time before they get everything rounded up, and then they have to find a way to feed them."

The Department accepted tax-deductible donations of fencing, livestock feed, T-posts, chain saws, electric fence chargers and supplies, and other items through Oct. 14. The supplies were collected at eight drop-off stations from Murray to Morehead.

James A. Watson, Mississippi's state veterinarian, wrote in a letter requesting help from Kentucky: "Due to



These cattle were herded from flood-ravaged portions of Louisiana after Hurricane Katrina made landfall.

winds and downed trees, fencing was destroyed and as a result our cattlemen and dairymen are in need of hay, feed and fencing supplies. Any donated items are welcomed. Thanks for your help."

Donations of \$1,000 or more have come from the Kentucky Pork Producers Association and the Kentucky Veterinary Medical Association as well as the Hardin County and Shelby County Cattlemen's Associations. Contributions of \$500 or more were received from Anderson Circle Farm, Phillip Bagwell of Paducah, Virginia Christian of Morganfield, Norman Lasley of Glendale, the Kentucky Dairy Development Council, Lincoln Trail Area Homemakers, Owen County Conservation District, and UK Block and Bridle. KCA Executive Director Dave Maples reported that contributions have been received from individuals and other groups, including at least one church. Other partners included Kentucky 4-H, Kentucky FFA and Kentucky Farm Bureau.

Sign Up For A Kentucky Proud Plate

By Maria Maldonado

The Kentucky Proud license plate was designed to show support for our farmers and food producers, market our Kentucky Proud program, and raise money for the Kentucky Agriculture and Environment in the Classroom fund.

The plate is \$25, but there is also a \$25 application fee. This makes the initial cost of the plate \$50. We need 900 applications before the Transportation Cabinet will approve the design and put the plate into production. Once we receive the 900 applications and the plate is approved, the Transportation Cabinet will notify you where and when the plates will be available. When you go to pick up your plate, you will pay the additional \$25 fee. The Ag in the Classroom fund will receive \$10 for each plate issued.



Our goal is for more people to become educated about the many facets of Kentucky agriculture and take an active role in supporting our farmers and agribusinesses by purchasing Kentucky Proud products and giving back to Kentucky farmers.

The plate is a “driving” advertisement for our farmers and food producers. When people see the Kentucky Proud license plate, they will want to know more about this plate and what it means to Kentucky agriculture. Don’t miss the opportunity to be part of the Kentucky Proud program, whether you’re a farmer or a concerned citizen who wants to help protect the future of Kentucky’s farmers and rural economies.

Download an application from the KDA Web site, www.kyagr.com, or contact Maria Maldonado at (502) 564-4696 for details.

Kentucky Nursery and Landscape Association Hosting Regional Show

The Kentucky Nursery and Landscape Association, in partnership with the Tennessee Nursery and Landscape Association and the Southern Nursery Association, will host the first-ever Mid-States Horticultural Expo Jan. 5-6 at the Kentucky Fair and Exposition Center in Louisville.

The MSHE is the result of combining the KNLA winter trade show and the TNLA summer trade show for a major regional event for the Mid-South.

More than 4,000 attendees are expected to visit more than 500 booths in the renovated South Wing of the fairgrounds.

Visitors will find wholesale growers, manufacturers and distributors with container plants, field-grown plants, chemicals, supplies and equipment on display.

To secure a booth or find out more information about this event, visit www.KNLA.org.

New Grant Program Will Help Beef Producers

By Warren Beeler

The Kentucky Department of Agriculture’s Office of Agriculture Marketing and Product Promotion is accepting applications from beef producers for a new grant program provided by the Agricultural Development Board to the Kentucky Cattlemen’s Association.

The grants are designed to help producers increase sales to consumers through retail stores, point-of-purchase materials, Web site development, advertising and promotional activities or meet legal labeling requirements through upgrading equipment, package labeling, UPC or bar coding.

The cost-share grants will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis on the merits of proposal and availability of funds. Criteria will include product quality, consumer visibility, ability to meet

high-volume demand, number of participants involved and ability to sell at the retail or foodservice level. Applicants must be members of the Kentucky Department of Agriculture’s Kentucky Proud marketing program and must have a current business plan. Applicants should wait for approval before they expend funds, in case their project is not funded.

All point-of-sale materials, print advertising, Web sites, labels, and any other printed materials, **must include the Kentucky Proud logo and the phrase “Made possible through support from the Agricultural Development Fund.”** Transcripts of radio advertisements must be included with applications.

Successful applicants may receive a one-time cost-share match of up to \$5,000. Applicants must provide at least a 50 percent cash match for all proposed

funding. No previous expenditures will be accepted for cost-share.

A committee selected by KDA and KCA will review the applications and award the funding.

Applications must be postmarked or received by March 31, 2006. Faxed applications will not be accepted. Grants will expire on June 30, 2006.

Applications may be obtained by written request to Beef Advertising and Promotion Cost-Share, Attn: Warren Beeler, Kentucky Department of Agriculture, 100 Fair Oaks Lane, 5th Floor, Frankfort, KY 40601. Completed applications must also be mailed to this address.

For more information contact Warren Beeler or Tim Dietrich with the Kentucky Department of Agriculture’s marketing office at (502) 564-4983.

Farmers' Markets Expanding Across Kentucky

By Janet Eaton

Farmers' markets continue to be a low-input, locally accessible marketplace for Kentucky farmers. The range of products offered at farmers' markets continues to grow as more producers venture into value-added products and non-traditional items such as meat and cut flowers.

In order to get a picture of farmers' markets the Kentucky Department of Agriculture asks markets to submit information each year when they register the market on their market strength.

The estimated total gross sales at all markets ranged between \$6 and \$7 million in 2004. This indicates a growth rate of 18-25 percent over the 2003 estimate of \$5.4 million, according to Matt Ernst with the UK College of Agriculture, who analyzed the data KDA collected. Even though markets suffered with widespread drought this past year, Ernst still predicts sales to easily top \$7 million in 2005.

Top sales markets were figured two ways. Based on average per-vendor sales, Boone County Farmers' Market tops the list with an average of \$14,000 per vendor reported. This market is open seven days per week, which affects the sales potential for the market. Boone County reports 50 registered vendors. Rowan Street Farmers' Market (Louisville) and Meade County Farmers' Market complete the top three.

Free Marketing Tool Available For Kentucky Businesses

By Kelly Ludwig

The **Kentucky Business Finder**, an online searchable database designed to promote sales for and between Kentucky businesses, has been launched by the Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development at www.KentuckyBusinessFinder.com.

The free access Web site allows users to search by type of business, product or service line, and even by county. Any business with at least one facility operating in Kentucky may register with the network. This database allows those inter-

In the total gross sales category, Boone County, with \$700,000 in reported sales, is followed by the Lexington Farmers' Market with \$600,000 and Bourbon County Farmers' Market with \$140,000.

Seven new markets were started in 2005. They were: Nicholas County Farmers' Market, Southeastern Kentucky Regional Farmers' Market (Corbin), Greenup County Farmers' Market, Lake Barkley Farmers' Market (Lyon County), Dayton Farmers' Market (Campbell County), Discover Downtown LaGrange (Oldham County) and Clay County Community Farmers' Market.

More farmers are discovering farmers' markets. The number of reported vendors increased 8.4 percent from the previous year to 1,678.

To help farmers enter this marketplace, KDA, in partnership with the Food Safety Branch of the Kentucky Department of Public Health, offers a comprehensive farmers' market manual complete with explanations of regulations, marketing hints, product-specific guides and much more. The manual can be viewed on the KDA Web site at <http://www.kyagr.com> by clicking on "farmers' markets" on the drop down menu. A limited number of hard copies of the manual will be available by calling Janet Eaton at (502) 564-4983 after the first of the year.

ested to locate a potential Kentucky supplier. Once identified, the searcher may contact selected businesses through an e-mail notice provided in the program. It is essentially a free marketing tool for Kentucky businesses!

More than 900 businesses are currently registered, and thousands more are expected to sign up over the next year.

To view the Web site or register your company in the database, please visit www.KentuckyBusinessFinder.com today!

'Kentucky Proud' Program Growing

By Anna Kindrick

Five hundred Kentucky producers applied to participate in the Kentucky Proud program for 2005.

Benefits of becoming a Kentucky Proud participant are: you will receive, at no charge, membership in the program for one year; printer-ready proofs of the official Kentucky Proud logo; a starter kit of Kentucky Proud logo labels and other promotional items. And you may qualify for these additional programs: assistance from the Kentucky Department of Agriculture's professional marketing specialists; horticulture advertising cost-sharing program; horticulture market development cost-sharing program; point of purchase cost-sharing program; and promotional marketing tools provided at cost.

KDA will begin to renew Kentucky Proud applications beginning January 1.

If you would like to renew or become a new member you may print an application from our Web site at www.kyproud.com or call our office at (502) 564-4983.

Small Business To Get Big Lift from State Loan

Governor Ernie Fletcher and Cabinet for Economic Development Secretary Gene Strong recently announced that the Kentucky Economic Development Finance Authority (KEDFA) is launching a program to assist businesses having 50 or fewer employees.

The program allows loans between \$15,000 and \$100,000. Loan proceeds may be used for acquisition, construction, expansion, working capital or any other business expense deemed reasonable by KEDFA. At least one full-time job must be created within the first year of the loan disbursement and maintained through the life of the loan.

Applications are currently being accepted. To find out whether the small business loan program is appropriate for your business, contact the Cabinet's Financial Incentives Department at (502) 564-4554 or visit www.thinkkentucky.com.

Wool Crafters Redefining 'Fiber Art'

By Bill Holleran

Wool textiles and fiber art are the latest trend, according to Lanette Freitag and Don Bowles of Lan Mark Farm, founding members of the Kentucky Wool Society and juried members of Kentucky Crafted.

The husband-and-wife team farm 370 acres in Bourbon County, where they helped develop a wool mill to create rugs, blankets, and a variety of clothing through a unique felting process. With help from a grant from the Agricultural Development Board and local investors, they purchased a picker, carder, and felting machines that speed up the process of making wool into textiles and crafts. Bowles has since made improvements to the felting machine and has applied for a patent on his ideas.

After wool has been washed, picked, and carded, it's turned into roving or batting and is sold for craft supplies for \$18-\$24 per pound, a significant increase from the standard 30 cents per pound for raw wool on the open market. The batting can be felted into finished products like rugs or clothing, adding value to the wool. No looms or sewing is required in the process. Felted wool can be made into such products as saddle blankets, Christmas tree skirts and ornaments,



Lanette Freitag and Don Bowles

and even three-dimensional art like teddy bears. The picking, carding and felting machines save a tremendous amount of time over the traditional hand-spun process.

Crafting has gained in popularity in the last few years, with the advent of stamping, scrapbooking, and paint-your-own pottery. Bowles and Freitag believe Fiber Art will be the next trend among crafters. "Everyone can create something to their skill level," said Freitag, who sells "Tangle Art" kits to make ornaments, hats, and teddy bears. "No stitching is required, and each creation is an original," she said. Her "flock-lock" rugs are unique pieces of art that can be created only through their unique felting process.

"We want to combine the skills of crafters and farmers," said Bowles, who has purchased wool from Kentucky sheep farmers to use in their textiles and tangle art kits. "Suffolk wool felts well, and we also really like Dorset and Texel wool," said Freitag. Coarse wools like Lincoln Romney and Karakul are also used in their "Flock Lock" rugs. Bowles has made walnut dye and walnut and tobacco stick buttons for the clothing they make. He invented the "tangle tool" that consists of two removable felting needles and a handle that helps felt larger handmade creations.

The creativity of these Kentucky entrepreneurs is inspiring and can be truly appreciated only by visiting their shop. The Wool Mill, located on Lan Mark Farm, is just off Ky. 57 on Ky. 1198. They are open Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 8 a.m.-10:30 a.m., Thursday from 10-5 and Saturday from 10-4. Add them to your list of must-see places to visit. If you are interested in becoming a distributor for "Kentucky Wool" products, contact Freitag at (859) 383-4560 or wool@kywool.com, or visit their Web site at www.kywool.com.

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